

Heriot-Watt wins Queen's Anniversary Prize

Heriot-Watt University has won the highest honour in UK education for its pioneering research in the field of photonics.

This is the fourth time the university has won the Queen's Anniversary Prize and it recognised the ground breaking research conducted in this area. The research has impacted on societies world wide from the nanoscale of mobile phone circuitry to the macroscale of ship-building, and its optical fibre sensor applications range from medically critical measurements within human bodies to the monitoring of oil and gas reservoirs in the ocean floor.

The Prince of Wales and The Princess Royal presented the Prize Medal and certificate to Professor Richard A. Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Heriot-Watt University, Professor Geoff Palmer, Chancellor of Heriot-Watt University and Professor Julian Jones, Senior Deputy Principal at Heriot-Watt and a leader in photonics research in a ceremony at St James's Palace in London.

Professor Richard A. Williams, spoke of the honour, saying: "This is an extremely proud occasion for everyone connected to this University. For two hundred years, Heriot-Watt has been committed to applying education and research for the betterment of society. Now, as we celebrate our bicentenary, it is wonderful to be recognised again with the highest national Honour available to the UK's further and higher education sector."

Professor Julian Jones, added: “It is a tremendous honour to collect this award in recognition of the outstanding research carried out by colleagues across the University, which, in turn, is helping transform lives around the world.

“For over 50 years, Heriot-Watt University has advanced photonics technology through its pioneering research and innovation; and while photonics may be an area of science unfamiliar to many, it is something we all encounter and benefit from in daily life. From super-fast internet to manufacturing, and from healthcare to national defence, photonics is all round us.

“Through our research we have contributed real practical and economic benefits, achieved by working closely with our colleagues in industry and business, and by supporting our students in undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral degree programmes.”

The Queen’s Anniversary Prizes are awarded every two years to the very best universities and colleges in their field after rigorous and independent assessment.

Prizes are awarded by The Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister, to institutions that have demonstrated excellence, innovation and public benefit to the wider world. In total, 21 UK universities and colleges were formally announced as the Round 14 Prize-winners in November 2021 in recognition of their work in areas crucial to UK and international society including the response to the pandemic and tackling climate change.



HRH the Prince of Wales and Professor Richard A. Williams